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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Benton County Sheriff Department Boosting Patrols for Upcoming Thanksgiving Holiday Travel

Fowler, IN. – The **Benton County Sheriff Department** announced today it will increase patrols for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday travel period – running November 11 through December 4, 2016. Officers will join more than 250 state and local law enforcement agencies, to conduct high-visibility patrols encouraging drivers and passengers to drive sober, and buckle up for safety.

“With Thanksgiving being a major travel time each year, it’s important we stay vigilante in keeping Indiana’s roadways safe for drivers and their passengers,” said **Sheriff, Don Munson**. “That’s why it’s so important for those behind the wheel and riders alike to buckle up and drive sober. It’s also important to watch out for your fellow travelers, and if you see something unsafe on the roads, don’t hesitate to call 911 and report it.”

Increased enforcement during the Thanksgiving Holiday period is an annual statewide effort supported by federal funding allocated to **Benton County Sheriff Department** from the Traffic Safety division of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI). Four officers will work overtime to conduct sobriety patrols, checkpoints, and seat belt patrols around the clock.

According to ICJI, in November 2015, there were 533 alcohol-related crashes across Indiana, resulting in 220 injuries and 7 fatalities. Additionally, in the same month, crash reports indicate 285 accidents involved a driver or a passenger unrestrained, resulting in 302 injuries and 16 fatalities.

Further, vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for kids between the ages of 8 and 15. For families with young children, it’s important to have a properly installed child safety seat or booster seat for each child. Parents can visit www.childseat.in.gov for a list of locations and a toll-free phone number to speak with experts about the proper installation of child safety seats

“Through statistics we know firsthand buckling up, staying sober behind the wheel, and not texting and driving not only protects those traveling with you, but also those with whom you are sharing the road,” said ICJI Director Dave Murtaugh. “That’s why it’s vital we work together, from officers patrolling our streets, to drivers making safe and responsible choices, in an effort to make our roadways the safest in the country.”

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